His Worship Fred Eisenberger  
Mayor  
City of Hamilton  
230–77 James Street North  
Hamilton, Ontario  
L8R 2K3  

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for your letter regarding Temporary Care Assistance (TCA), available through the Ontario Works program, which was forwarded to my by Premier Dalton McGuinty.

Our government is committed to providing help to children in need. We understand and appreciate the significant contribution that grandparents in your community make when caring for extended family members.

Contrary to what has been reported, I would like to emphasize that we have not changed the rules governing TCA. As part of my ministry’s update of all the Ontario Works policy directives, we have simplified the guidelines for TCA to better support local Ontario Works offices in making decisions regarding eligibility. The new guidelines clarify that there is no specific time-limit on the receipt of TCA, that eligibility determinations are made locally on a case-by-case basis and are based on individual circumstances.

Staff in my ministry are working to address issues raised by concerned groups including increasing awareness of the supports available to adult caregivers caring for children. As you know, staff from my ministry’s Hamilton/Niagara regional office have met with members of your social services department and grandparents from your community to discuss TCA. As well, staff from my ministry’s Ontario Works Branch have been communicating with all of the local delivery agents to ensure that TCA is delivered fairly and consistently across the province. My ministry has taken proactive steps to ensure the public is aware that TCA will continue to be there for those who require temporary assistance.

.../cont’d
We are continuing to increase our investment in TCA. Since taking office, our government has increased TCA benefits by nine per cent. In addition, as of August 2008, we no longer reduce TCA benefits by any portion of the federal National Child Benefit Supplement. Overall, our government has invested $12.8 million this year for TCA, an increase of nearly 14 per cent from last year.

We are always reviewing our programs to help ensure that they assist our most vulnerable people while being accountable and sustainable to taxpayers. We remain committed to helping our province's most vulnerable families.

Once again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Madeleine Meilleur
Minister

c. Premier Dalton McGuinty
   The Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Children and Youth Services